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PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Stitts Move Animals to Safety as Contempt Trial Draws Near
Family That Prepared for Y2K to Be Broken Up Sept 10.**

Bois Blanc Island, MI (August 31) - A sad spectacle was played out today in Autumn-like weather as Michael and Christine Stitt ferried their animals from Bois Blanc Island to foster care on the mainland near Cheboygan.

With only days to go before facing civil contempt charges, and their likely imprisonment as proposed by Lyle Peck, Attorney for the Township that has persecuted the family, the Stitts are hurriedly doing what they can to safeguard the animals.

"These animals are life to us. The goat gives its milk for our little Ruth Ann and the chickens feed my children. They are what we depend on to get us through the winter. I don't know what we will do without them," said Christine during an interview today with one of the many journalists who have contacted them.

Mike and Christine own 37 acres of wilderness land on Bois Blanc Island in Northern Lake Huron. When they came to the island nearly 5 years ago, the township board welcomed the family, which now numbers 8 souls, and their animals. In August of 1997 the township zoning board even granted approval for the animals but asked that Mike buy permits to build the barns that housed them. It was then that trouble started to happen. The township was never satisfied with what Mike did and repeatedly condemned and "redtagged" the buildings as they were constructed. Mike is a barn builder by trade and his structures exceed local codes, but Mike feels that since he has a farm and agriculture, that permits and inspections aren't necessary and the zoning and building inspector would not allow him to continue improving his own property. The laws of Michigan agree. Nevertheless, the 37 acre piece of prime real estate is zoned residential and it was decided by the zoning board that the animals and a large garden, once permitted, are no longer allowed.

In July of 1999, the Township had the Stitts in court for zoning violations. In an agreement that the Stitts claim was fraudulently executed by lawyers without their knowledge or signatures, the court ordered the entire farm to be disposed of by October 7,

1999 with every building, piece of equipment, and every animal removed and even the ground swept clean of seeds, feed, and manure.

The Stitts could not comply with the short time and sought relief by posting "Waiver of Torte" notices, essentially declaring that the court proceedings were illegal and fraudulent. The Stitts would not comply with the October 7 deadline. In an act of reprisal, the Township Board directed Lawyer Peck to obtain a subpoena for Mike and Christine to defend themselves in the Mackinaw County District Court on September 10, against charges of civil contempt.

In a brief written for the court, Lawyer Peck demands that the Mike and Christine be jailed for 30 days and fined \$500 as punitive action for their contempt. If jailed, the Stitts most assuredly cannot meet the original Oct 7 deadline. Moreover, after October 8, more jail time and fines will be imposed.

Last week, it was disclosed that the land the Stitts own could be worth 2 million dollars when subdivided. Since the Stitts cannot comply with the court's order to cleanse the land and return it to its original pristine condition, the job to do so will likely fall to the township. The contract to clean up the Stitt property will be given to Island Contractors, owned by the husband of Clover Schlund, the clerk of the township and the chief antagonist against the Stitts. The estimated cost of cleanup will be far greater than the Stitts can pay. The land will be confiscated in lieu of payment. The township will enrich itself by obtaining the 37 acre property from the Stitts and ridding themselves of the Stitt family by this means.

Within the next few days, stories of this travesty of justice and the corruption will hit national news services. Journalists from around America have contacted the Stitts and the radio talk shows have invited Christine to tell the tale of greed and avarice by the gang of pirates posing as a township board.

But sadly, nothing can stop Mike and Christine from doing what they must do now to save the animals. With Chad and Michael Junior's help, the animals are taken away from the farm where the Stitts loved and cared for them. On September 10, as Mike and Christine are taken to jail, other occupants of the property will be taken away, this time the six children. And then the buildings will be bulldozed and the house demolished and burned and nothing will remain but the memories, the newspaper stories, and the tears.

END PRESS RELEASE